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APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT
OF

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For

CARD GAME

 Applicant hereby claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (e) from the following
Provisional United States Application:

Serial No. 60/158,756 filed October 12, 1999

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5 CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application is a continuation of my U.S. Patent Application No. 09/315,295, filed May 20, 1999, and claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) from the following U.S. provisional patent applications: Serial Number 60/158,756 filed October 12, 1999, which is incorporated by reference.

10 FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention generally relates to card games and, in particular, to card games for use in casinos and cardrooms.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 The present invention is a seven-card-stub poker game, played with at least one but preferably one standard poker deck of 52 cards plus at least one but preferably one Joker. The "Joker" may be used as an Ace or to form a Straight or Flush. Two or more players, preferably seven players, may participate in any given round of play. One of the players is the Banker whom other players play against. A Player who is not a Banker may play Poker Bet against the Banker's hand and/or Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet on the
20 contents of the Player's own hand. After at least one wager is placed, each Player and the Banker is dealt seven cards. From each Player's own seven cards, each Player selects his or her best 5-card poker hand as his or her keeper hand and discards two other cards, which are treated as two discards; i.e., from the Player's seven dealt cards KKQJ982, KKQJ9 is the Player's best 5-card poker hand and 82 are the two discards;
25 from AAKQ933, AA33K is the best 5-card poker hand and Q9 are the two discards. From the Banker's seven cards, the Banker selects the Banker's best 5-card poker hand as the Banker's keeper hand and discards two other cards.

Poker Bet allows a Player to place a wager against the Banker's hand. The object of
30 Poker Bet is to have a best 5-card poker that outranks the Banker's best 5-card poker hand. In Poker Bet, the Player's best 5-card poker hand is compared to the Banker's best 5-card poker hand according to traditional poker rankings, wherein hands are ranked in descending order as follows: 5 Aces, Royal Flush, Straight Flush, 4 of a Kind, Full House, Flush, Straight, 3 of a Kind, Two Pair, One Pair and High Card. Ace is the highest High Card, following by King, Queen, Jack, Ten, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 and 2 (the lowest High Card).
35 Ace, 2, 3, 4, 5 is the 2nd highest Straight, behind AKQJ10 (Royal Flush).

This Poker Bet wager wins if the Player's best 5-card poker hand outranks the Banker's best 5-card poker hand, and is paid either Even Money (1 to 1) or one half of the wager (1 to 2) if the Banker's losing best 5-card poker hand is a King-Jack-high hand or a low hand; i.e., the best 5-card poker hand KJ986 is a King-Jack-high hand or Q9875 is a

low r hand. This wager loses if the Player's best 5-card ranks low r than th Bank r's. If th Play r's and th Banker' best 5-card poker hand rank the sam , two hands push and this wager neither wins nor loses. This payout odds yields a house advantage of 2.17%.

- 5 Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet allows a Player to bet on the contents of the Player's own unseen hand. This wager wins if the Player's best 5-card poker hand is a pair of Aces r better (Two Pair, 3 of a Kind, Straight, Flush, Full House, 4 of a Kind, Straight Flush, Royal Flush or 5 Aces); this wager loses if the Player's best 5-card poker hand is any other type of hand. This winning wager is paid Even Money (1 to 1) on a hand of Two Pair
10 or better, and is paid one and one half of the wager (3 to 2) on a hand that has two or more Aces in either the Player's best 5-card poker hand or the Player's own seven cards. This payout odds yields a house advantage of 1.81%

- 15 It is a primary object of the invention to create, by using familiar elements of traditional poker games, a game that is simple, exciting and relaxing, and can be easily learned, played and enjoyed by everyone. It is another primary object to create Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet that resembles slot machine payoff: skill is not required for a return. It is another object to allow Players to play two even-money bets per hand, enhancing the action at the table. It is a further object to create an embodiment that can be a casino
20 game, which is played in a friendly, social atmosphere of a casino setting. It is another further object to create an embodiment that can be a cardroom game, which is played in a cardroom setting where players play against a Player-Banker (a non-house Banker). Another object is to provide players a speedy and more exciting way to enjoy the popular Pai Gow Poker game. An embodiment of this invention is offered under the trademark "7 Card Thrill."

25 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a preferred layout of a casino card table of the invention.

Fig. 2 is a rules card for a casino card game of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

- 30 In the preferred embodiment of the invention provides a seven-card stud poker game, played with one standard poker deck of 52 cards plus one Joker. Other embodiments include versions that would be played with at least one standard poker deck of 52 cards plus at least one Joker. Another embodiment includes a version that would be played with at least one standard deck of 52 cards with no Joker.

- 35 In the preferred embodiment, the Joker is "semi-wild" and may be used as an Ace, or to form a Straight, Flush, Straight Flush or Royal Flush. In another embodiment, the J ker is "wild" and may be used as any card; this alters the odds, payoffs and house advantages from the preferred embodiment and adds twelve (12) more ranking hands of 5 Deuces through 5 Kings to th ranking hands of the pr f red embodiment.

In the preferred embodiment, two or up to seven players may participate in any given

round of play and one of them is the Banker whom other players play against. In another embodiment, two or up to the number of players that the cards are dealt into enough dealt hands of seven cards to provide a dealt hand for each Player and for the Banker, may participate in any given round of play.

- 5 A Player who is not a Banker may play Poker Bet against the Banker's hand and/or Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet on the contents of the Player's own hand. Poker Bet and Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet are two independent wagers and are settled separately, regardless of the outcome of each other. After at least one wager is placed, each Player and the Banker is dealt seven cards. Once having delivered the cards to all players, the dealer turns over the
- 10 Banker's seven cards with only the top card exposed. From each Player's own seven cards, each Player selects his or her best 5-card poker hand and discards two other cards, then each Player places his or her cards on the appropriate spaces of the table layout. The dealer then reveals the Banker's six remaining cards, selects the Banker's best 5-card poker hand, discards two other cards, settles each Player's Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet wager first, and
- 15 then settles each Player's Poker Bet wager.

POKER BET

- The object of Poker Bet is to have a best 5-card poker that outranks the Banker's best 5-card poker hand. In Poker Bet, a Player's best 5-card poker hand is compared to the Banker's best 5-card poker hand according to traditional poker rankings, which are rank d
- 20 in descending order as follows: 5 Aces, Royal Flush, Straight Flush, 4 of a Kind, Full House, Flush, Straight, 3 of a Kind, Two Pair, One Pair and High Card. Ace is the highest High Card, following by King, Queen, Jack, Ten, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 and 2.

- In the preferred embodiment, A2345 is the second highest Straight, behind AKQJ10. In another embodiment, A2345 is the lowest Straight, behind 23456. Changing the ranking of
- 25 A2345 does not effect the odds of the related embodiments.

The Poker Bet wager may be settled with either one of the following embodiments:

- In a preferred embodiment, if the Player's hand (best 5-card poker hand) ranks lower than the Banker's hand (best 5-card poker hand), this wager loses. If the Player's and the Banker's hand rank the same, then two hands push and this wager neither wins nor lo s.
- 30 If the Player's hand ranks higher than the Banker's, this wager wins and is paid either Even Money (1 to 1) or *one half of the wager (1 to 2) if the Banker's losing hand is King-Jack or lower.*

- In another embodiment, if the Player's hand ranks lower than the Banker's, this wager loses. If the Player's and the Banker's hand rank the same, two hands push and this wager
- 35 neither wins nor loses. If the Player's hand ranks higher than the Banker's, this wager wins and is paid either Even Money (1 to 1) or *one half of the wager (1 to 2) if the Banker's losing hand is a predetermined ranking hand or a lower ranking hand such as the Banker's losing is King-Ten or lower, King-Nine or lower, Queen-Jack or lower, Queen-Ten or lower, Jack-high or lower, etc.*

- 40 In another embodiment, *if the Banker's hand is 'not' a qualifying hand of a King-Queen-*

high hand (such as a hand of KQ987) or a better hand (such as a hand of AAJ85), this wager wins and is paid one half of the wager. If the Player's hand ranks lower than the Banker's hand and the Banker's hand is King-Queen or better, this wager loses. If the Player's and the Banker's hand rank the same and the Banker's hand is King-Queen or better, two hands push and this wager neither wins nor loses. If the Player's hand ranks higher than the Banker's and the Banker's hand is King-Queen or better, this wager wins and is paid Even Money (1 to 1).

In another embodiment, if the Banker's hand is not a qualifying hand of a predetermined ranking hand or a better ranking hand, such as a qualifying hand of King-Jack or better, King-Ten or better, King-Nine or better, Queen-Jack or better, etc., this wager wins and is paid one half of the wager (1 to 2). If the Player's hand ranks lower than the Banker's and the Banker's hand is a qualifying hand, this wager loses. If the Player's and the Banker's hand rank the same and the Banker's hand is a qualifying hand, two hands push and this wager neither wins nor loses. If the Player's hand ranks higher than the Banker's hand and the Banker's hand is a qualifying hand, this wager wins and is paid Even Money (1 to 1).

In another embodiment, if the Banker's hand is not a qualifying hand of a predetermined ranking hand or a better ranking hand such as a qualifying hand of King-Ten or better, King-Nine or better, Queen-Jack or better, Queen-Ten or better, Jack-Ten or better, etc., this wager pushes and no money is won or lost. If the Player's hand ranks lower than the Banker's and the Banker's hand is a qualifying hand, this wager loses. If the Player's and the Banker's hand rank the same and the Banker's hand is a qualifying hand, two hands push and this wager neither wins nor loses. If the Player's hand ranks higher than the Banker's hand and the Banker's hand is a qualifying hand, this wager wins and is paid Even Money (1 to 1).

In another embodiment, if the Player's hand ranks lower than the Banker's, this wager loses. If the Player's and the Banker's hand rank the same, two hands push and this wager neither wins nor loses. If the Player's hand ranks higher than the Banker's, this wager wins and is paid Even Money (1 to 1), less a certain percent commission such as a 5% commission, a 4% commission, etc.

PAIR OF ACES OR BETTER BET

Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet allows a Player to bet on the contents of his or her unseen hand. This wager wins if the Player's best 5-card poker hand is a pair of Aces or better (Two Pair, 3 of a Kind, Straight, Flush, Full House, 4 of a Kind, Straight Flush, Royal Flush or 5 Aces); this wager loses if the Player's best 5-card poker hand is any other type of hand. In the preferred embodiment, Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet pays Even Money (1 to 1) on a hand of Two Pair or better, and pays 3 to 2 on a hand of two or more Aces in either the Player's best 5-card poker hand or the Player's seven cards; this payout odds yields a house advantage of 1.81%. In another embodiment, Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet pays Even Money (1 to 1) on a hand of a pair of Aces, Two Pair, 3 of a Kind, Straight or Flush, and pays 5 to 2 on a hand of Full House or better; this payout odds yields a house advantage of about 2.97%. Alternatively, other appropriate payout odds can be created by adjusting the suggested payouts of Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet.

THE DEAL

In the preferred embodiment, the invention uses a standard poker deck of 52 cards plus one Joker. In other embodiments of the invention use at least one standard poker deck of 52 cards plus at least one Joker.

- 5 In the preferred embodiment, the invention offers seven positions. Table size, management of Players and their bets, and speed of play are the key reasons for the choice of seven positions. Alternatively, lesser or greater than seven positions can be created in accordance with this invention if, for example, multiple decks are used.

- 10 In the preferred embodiment, the Banker receives his or her own seven-card dealt hand and each Player receives his or her own seven-card dealt hand, starting from the Player sitting to the immediate left of the dealer, continuing in a clockwise fashion and ending with the Dealer. Cards are preferably dealt to each Player and to the Banker one card at a time for seven times if the cards are shuffled by a dealer; the cards are preferably dealt to each Player and to the Banker in a stack of seven cards if the cards are shuffled by a shuffling device. In another preferred embodiment, seven seven-card dealt hands are always dealt, regardless of the actual number of players; and some random number generation device, such as a random number generator display or a dice shaker, is used to assign the dealt hands to players to reduce the likelihood of problems in dealing. Other traditional methods used in other poker games may be used for the deal.
- 15

- 20 In another embodiment, each Player and the Banker may receive their own hand in either one of the following fashions:

1. they receive their own six cards and one community card;
2. they receive their own five cards and two community cards;
3. they receive their own four cards and three community cards;
- 25 4. they receive their own three cards and four community cards;
5. they receive their own two cards and five community cards;
6. they receive their own one card and six community cards; and
7. they receive no card of their own and seven community cards.

- 30 After at least one wager is placed, the cards are thoroughly shuffled either by a shuffling device or by a dealer, and are dealt into enough dealt hands of seven cards to provide a dealt hand for each Player and for the Banker. Once the dealer has delivered the cards to all players, the dealer turns over the Banker's seven cards face up with only the top card exposed. From each Player's own seven cards, each Player selects his or her best 5-card poker hand, discards two other cards, and places his or her cards face down on the appropriate spaces of the table layout. The dealer then reveals the Banker's six remaining cards, selects the Banker's best 5-card poker hand, discards two other cards, opens the cards of the Player at the immediate right of the dealer, and settles the Player's Pair Of Aces Or Better Bet wager first, then settles the Player's Poker Bet wager. The dealer collects the losing chip(s) before paying the winning bet(s). After completing the transaction of the Player at the immediate right of the dealer, the dealer moves on and completes the transaction of the next Player in the game, and so on. Upon the completion of all transactions, a new round of play will begin.
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